

Secret

DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Central Intelligence Bulletin

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51

9 October 1969

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Approved For Release 2003/06/11 : CIA-RDP79T00975A014700060001-2

Approved For Release 2003/06/11 : CIA-RDP79T00975A014700060001-2

SECRET

No. 0242/69
9 October 1969

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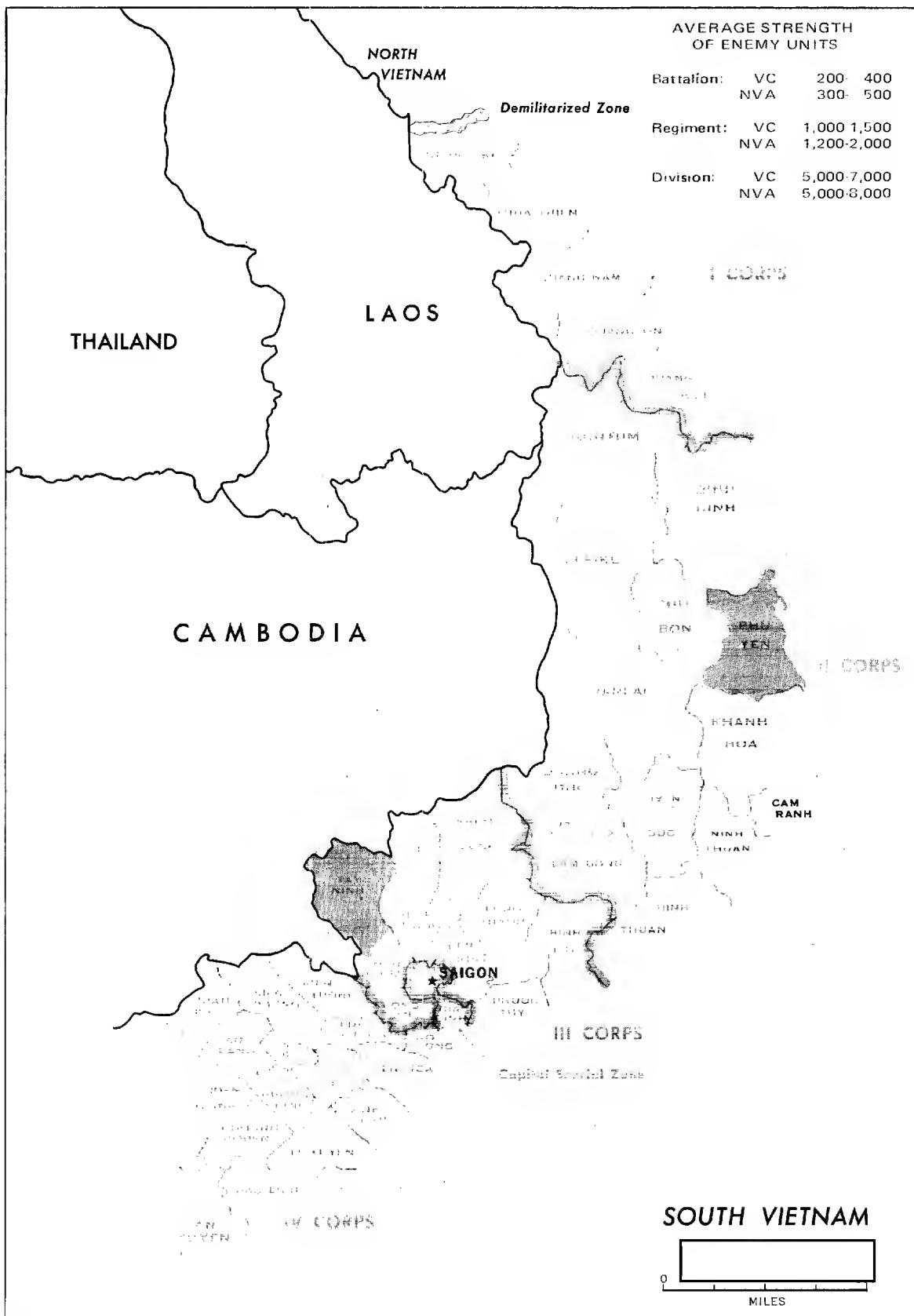
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[South Vietnam: Firefights between South Vietnamese troops and Communist forces continued to flare up in the Mekong Delta on 7-8 October, amid indications the enemy may soon launch fresh attacks northwest of Saigon.

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[] the Communists plan to close the fall campaign with several assaults on allied outposts in Tay Ninh Province, after which the results will be analyzed with an eye to beginning a winter-spring campaign.

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There are more reports of North Vietnamese troops being absorbed into Viet Cong local force units, reportedly in part to create an appearance of a North Vietnamese withdrawal from the battlefield.

A recent defector has confirmed earlier information that a North Vietnamese regiment in Phu Yen Province was disbanded last summer and its subordinate units reassigned to provincial forces. The defector claimed this was done to give the impression of a North Vietnamese disengagement from South Vietnam. Other reports suggest this same process may have occurred in some parts of the country but hard evidence of this sort is lacking. Earlier reports claimed the North Vietnamese were joining Viet Cong units to bolster their sagging morale and flesh them out. [] (Map)]

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Japan: [Public opinion is gradually accepting a more active self-defense role and less reliance on the US.]

[A recent poll by a leading Japanese newspaper shows that significant portions of the Japanese public now favor armed neutrality or at least a greater role for Japan within its defense alliance with the US. The preference for more self-reliance in the future is probably related to a feeling by nearly half of those polled that the US would not come to Japan's aid in an emergency. This attitude and the replies to questions about US bases suggest that the Japanese Government has little room for maneuver in its negotiations with the US on Okinawan reversion.]

[Not surprisingly, almost half of those polled favored the same regulations for US bases in Okinawa after reversion that now apply to US bases on the Japanese mainland. Thirty-seven percent want the bases removed before reversion. On the question of future use of Okinawa bases for combat operations, 56 percent of those polled on the mainland and 60 percent of those on Okinawa said that the Japanese Government should veto such use through prior consultation.]

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Norway: The government hopes that it will be able to frustrate any effort by radical members of the opposition to force recognition of North Vietnam, but its success is not assured.

If Norway were to recognize Hanoi, it would be the first NATO member to do so. Recognition was promised as part of the program of the opposition Labor Party, which came close to unseating the ruling center-right coalition in the elections early last month. The party's leadership has apparently decided not to raise the issue, but its position could be challenged by party radicals.

The radicals may try to force the issue when the new parliament's general foreign policy debate is held in late November or early December. A debate on recognition alone could, however, be precipitated by some extraneous development, such as the recent declaration by the Swedish Social Democrats of support for substantial aid to North Vietnam.

Key Norwegian officials are alert to the problem and aware of the potential consequences for US-Norwegian relations. Yet the government is also aware that parliamentary discussion of the issue might reveal that some radical members of the coalition Liberal Party are sympathetic to recognition. Rather than risk being forced out of office by the defection of as few as two deputies on this issue, the coalition may prefer to take action leading toward relations with Hanoi.

The government's first line of defense is to keep the issue from ever coming up in parliament, arguing that Norway already has useful contacts with Hanoi through its embassy in Peking. At the same time, the government has attempted to placate the opposition with such gestures as inviting a touring North Vietnamese delegation of technical experts to lunch with the foreign minister.

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European Communities: [The Commission has achieved at least a procedural victory in the compromise reached with Bonn to protect German farmers from the impact of the floating mark.]

[The EC Court of Justice in special session on Sunday refused Germany's request to set aside the Commission's decision opposing the unilateral German supplementary levies. At the Council of Ministers meeting on Monday, the Commission asked the council to recommend a temporary solution.]

[A compromise proposal put forward by the French was accepted by the Commission and Germany. The Commission then revised its previous decision in light of the council's recommendation and agreed to permit limited German supplementary levies. The levies would be less than those proposed by Germany and valid only until the mark is pegged. They would also be on a restricted number of products to be determined by the Commission. The Germans indicated that a de jure revaluation would be the highest priority item once a new government had been formed.]

[The problem of what Bonn will be allowed to do for German farmers, however, is far from resolved. There has been no agreement on what measures will be taken once the value of the mark is pegged, when the Commission maintains that the supplementary levies will expire. The Germans apparently feel entitled to treatment equal to that granted the French following devaluation of the franc. This would involve supplementary levies for a period of up to two years and lead to a further deterioration of the Common Agricultural Policy.]

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USSR: The Soviets launched a weather satellite from Plesetsk on 5 October either to supplement or replace the only other active Soviet weather satellite in orbit.

The older satellite has been functioning since March 1969 and may be approaching the end of its active life. Both have been designated by the Soviets as "Meteor" satellites--the first of which reportedly transmitted real-time television pictures of the earth's cloud cover only while over the Soviet Union. Recent statements by a Soviet scientist, however, suggest that future "Meteor" satellites will transmit continuously while orbiting the earth.

The Soviets may intend to use frequencies similar to those of US weather satellites. A ground receiver named "Meteorit," built by the Soviets and given to the Cubans, is used to pick up US weather satellite real-time television transmissions. The same "Meteorit" device might receive future "Meteor" transmissions.

If the Soviets begin continuous television transmissions from orbit using the same frequencies as US weather satellites, any nation with a suitable ground receiver could pick up transmissions from both the US and the Soviet satellites.

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USSR-Syria: The USSR continues to help Syria develop its petroleum industry.

Experts from the Soviet oil research institute arrived in Syria last week to spend two months preparing a comprehensive plan for oil production. Following his visit to Moscow last August, the Syrian minister of oils and electric power announced that the USSR would help in establishing a research laboratory for Syria's proposed oil institute.

The Soviets have been involved in the exploration of oil resources in northeast Syria for more than ten years. Largely through their assistance, Syria was able to begin commercial production of oil in April 1968. Last year's goal of three million tons was not met, but production did reach about one million tons. The output has been increasing steadily, but the 1969 production target of five million tons probably is also unrealistic.

With domestic consumption of less than two million tons annually, Syria is becoming an oil exporting nation. Despite the fact that its high-sulphur crude is not readily marketable, Syria reportedly has concluded deals with France, Italy, Austria, East Germany, and Bulgaria. [redacted]

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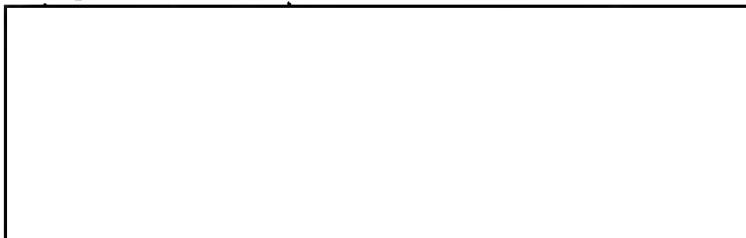
Tunisia: Former defense minister Ahmed Mestiri has initiated an unprecedented bid to gain political power outside the country's one-party political system.

Mestiri, who resigned early in 1968 in protest over prevailing economic policies, called last Saturday for the postponement of the presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for 2 November. As justification for the delay, he cited President Bourguiba's prolonged ill health and a number of problems requiring urgent solutions. Mestiri warned that if the elections were not delayed, he would be "obliged" to offer his own candidacy, but his somewhat ambiguous statement suggests that he would run for the national assembly rather than for the presidency.

Mestiri's proposal to postpone the elections is probably only a tactic to introduce his bid for future power. Over the short term, he may hope to use a seat in the assembly as a forum for broadening his support. When the question of presidential succession is eventually posed, he could then be in a position to challenge Bourguiba's heir apparent, Bahi Ladgham, whose power is based on his positions as secretary of state for the presidency and secretary general of the ruling party.

It is premature to evaluate Mestiri's prospects. He is well regarded for his honesty and courage by both the business community and the military. He might also draw some support from organized labor.

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GUATEMALA: Guerrillas Stage Largest Rural Action in Two Years



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Guatemala: The largest rural guerrilla action in at least two years occurred this week.

The attacks against three oil drilling camps near the Mexican border took place on 4 and 5 October in an unpopulated area with no history of guerrilla activity. A well disciplined group of about 40 men systematically stripped the camps of supplies and equipment and painted Rebel Armed Forces (FAR) slogans on the walls. The workers were subjected to an anti-US harangue and were invited to join the insurgency movement.

The Guatemalan defense minister says he is directing a 100-man parachute drop into the main camp today. The mobility of the guerrillas and the isolation of the oil company sites will probably give the operation little chance of success. It is possible that the guerrillas intended to draw Guatemalan troops away from their regular posts.

[redacted] 25X1
the Communist organization soon intends to attack a prominent Guatemalan political figure. [redacted]

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[redacted] one attack might be the assassination or kidnaping of one of the presidential candidates to gain national and international publicity.

The various Communist guerrilla-terrorist bands have been concentrating for over a year on organizing, training, and arming themselves. The professionalism of the unusual raids in Alta Verapaz suggests this strategy has been effective. The insurgent groups are likely to inaugurate a siege of terror soon, probably to coincide with the official opening of the campaign in November for the elections next March.

(Map)

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Panama: [The provisional junta government is planning to make three major policy pronouncements on Saturday, the first anniversary of the military coup.]

25X1 [] the government will announce the immediate restoration of constitutional guarantees, including freedom of the press. All political prisoners except suspected guerrillas will be released, and election of a constitutional assembly will be scheduled for October 1970. The assembly will be charged with revising the constitution and ratifying a new canal treaty with the US.]

[These initiatives apparently are designed to remove the major popular grievances against the government, but it seems clear that the present leaders have no intention of relinquishing power in the near future. All political parties have been dissolved, and the government is organizing a broadly based political organization patterned on the Mexican example to replace them.]

[This new organization, the New Panama Movement, will be formally unveiled tomorrow. Its platform reportedly will proclaim an end to corrupt government by rich business interests and will promise reforms designed to benefit urban laborers and peasants. The key foreign policy goal will be revision of the canal treaty.]

[] 25X1 militant opposition elements are planning to embarrass the government by disrupting the 11 October celebrations. The arrest of potential troublemakers may have damped chances of major demonstrations, but some violent incidents cannot be ruled out.]

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Chile - Eastern Europe: Chile and Romania have signed an agreement to form a joint company for exploration and exploitation of copper and other mineral deposits. This agreement represents the third joint venture Chile has concluded with an East European country involving the exploitation of Chilean copper. Earlier this year, the Chilean Government approved a joint Hungarian-Chilean company to manufacture copper cable in Chile. In return for 50 percent ownership in the company, Hungary will provide mining machinery, technical assistance, and an assured market for the company's output in Hungary and other East European countries. A joint Chilean-Yugoslav company also was established last May to prospect for copper in Chile.

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Pakistan: President Yahya Khan reportedly has had a new constitution drawn up and intends to publish it next January following the completion of the preliminary electoral rolls. In a nationwide broadcast on 28 July, Yahya warned that he would propose a constitution if the country's disparate politicians failed to come up with their own. It is uncertain whether a government-sponsored constitution would be acceptable, particularly to students and other dissidents, but Yahya is said to have already gained the support of popular Bengali politician Mujibur Rahman.

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